



# In Bounds

by Jack MacKenzie CGCS

A short while back my wife Kim and I went on a weekend 'road trip' to

Grand Marais on a mission to check out their annual wooden boat show. Cool stuff...many of the boats were hand crafted at the North House School and by local boat masters...and talk about handsome! The display, both on and off the water was very impressive, but not as personally enlightening as our 'road trip' entertainment.

To make the miles melt, my spouse and I have learned that audio books can be a very welcomed distraction. We have embraced the funny, the tragic and the dramatic productions written by many fine authors as Kim and I adventure about. On this trip we listened to something enriching, enlightening, inspirational, emotional and very, very educational... ***Men Are From Mars and Women Are From Venus*** by Dr. James Gray.

Although each of us had read the self-help book back in the early nineties while struggling with relationship

building after challenging divorces, we obviously had forgotten some of the lessons as we intently listened to, paused the cd and discussed the Dr.'s perceptions. Also, as our relationship had matured with time so had our ability to communicate through constructive or destructive habits. Over time we discovered that we forgot how different the sexes really are.

Our audible journey presented material we already knew...but had either forgotten or through living patterns stopped practicing. Lets face it, often times relationships get into ruts and if not appreciated those ruts can become communication crevices; difficult to overcome and sometimes insurmountable. **Men Are...** brought Kim and me back to reflecting upon our inherent differences, both good and challenging, and gave us tools to improve our marriage...not that either of us have been or were ever dissatisfied with the other.

The chapters took us through many scenarios, some quite funny and some gravely serious, but each with a lesson. Beyond physical aspects, we are as different from each other as Dollar Spot (continued on page 32.)

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is different from Brown Patch. Each triggered or calmed by different inputs. And as G.I. Joe says, “Knowing is half the battle!” Thus the material we listened to allowed us insight into valuable knowledge about the opposite sexes ‘buttons’. Here are a couple of examples.

Guys are problem solvers. To solve problems they often become quiet and remove themselves to a mental and/or sometimes physical ‘cave’. Through this isolation and introspection problems can be solved. There is nothing wrong with this process. Prodding questions such as, “Why are you so quiet? What is wrong with our relationship? Why are you ignoring me?” will send a guy deeper into the cave as he doesn’t need to nor wants to solve these ‘new’ problems. Other guys respect caves as they have one of their own. Men want to solve their own problems, come out of the cave and be appreciated when they either come out of the cave and/or have solved the problem at hand.

Appreciation is the quickest way to a man’s heart.

Gals are different in that rather than going into a cave they vocalize their challenges, in a cooperative effort, seemingly disconnected sentences and ideas that, as a guy who solves problems, each comment brings along a challenge to be solved. Women are fully capable of figuring their own solutions but rather than going into a cave to figure them out

they talk about them in a more social arrangement. There is nothing wrong with this problem solving method. Other women respect this and thus listen as their girlfriend gabs away in seemingly disconnect until she solves her own problem. Women just want to be listened to. Practice these words, “Uhuh, sure, yup and wow.” As much as you want to and know you could... don’t solve her problem unless invited to.

Learn to give an open ear and shut mouth and you will very soon be appreciated.

If Dr. Gray is only half correct about women as much as he is so absolutely right on about guys then this is a must read or listen to for each of you. Go to this link for the Cliff Notes version:

[http://www.wikisummaries.org/Men\\_Are\\_From\\_Mars,\\_Women\\_Are\\_From\\_Venus](http://www.wikisummaries.org/Men_Are_From_Mars,_Women_Are_From_Venus)

Better yet, plan a road trip with your significant other, grab an audio copy and travel a road less explored. Perhaps if you learned a few new tricks on listening and she learned how to keep out of your cave, especially during the stressful summer season, your relationship will grow. Mine has, both individually and with my wife as we try our best to listen to and appreciate one another while understanding the vast differences between our needs and how they are met.

Gas up, it is a long journey!